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Marketing Farmers' Markets: Ideas for Market Vendors & Managers in Nevada

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Introduction

In 1994, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Marketing Service (USDA-AMS) began tracking the number of farmers' markets nationwide. At the start there were 1,755 farmers' markets across the country; in 2008 there were 4,685, an increase of nearly 168 percent (USDA-AMS, 2008). This increase shows the popularity and appeal of farmers' markets to consumers and highlights the importance of this direct marketing outlet for agricultural producers.

There are many reasons consumers choose to shop at farmers' markets, from an interest in fresh, local food products, minimizing "food miles" (the distance food travels from farm to table) and supporting local agriculture, to socialization and enjoying community events. Understanding who your customers are and what they are looking to get out of their farmers' market experience can help you to customize your marketing approach to best serve them. This publication includes the results of a cluster analysis that identifies three distinct groups of farmers' market customers in Nevada from a statewide survey conducted in 2008. Results show a clear division between those consumers who have a preference for organics versus those who have a preference for locally produced foods. Marketing ideas are presented for each group.

The second section of the publication is devoted to general programming, marketing and advertising ideas. Finally, not all markets succeed. The 168 percent increase in the number of farmers' markets is a *net* increase; in addition to markets that opened, it captures the markets that have closed. To address this, the final two sections of the publication present methods you can use to assess your market, an overview of results from an Oregon State University study on factors that may lead to market decline, and presentation of possible solutions.

Methods

A survey of customers at 12 farmers' markets across Nevada was conducted by researchers from the University of Nevada, Reno during the 2008 farmers' market season. A total of 669 survey responses were collected, with 384 from markets in Southern Nevada and 285 from markets in Northern Nevada. Each market was analyzed individually to determine the market, produce, and vendor attributes customers most prefer at each market; average market spending per customer; distance traveled to reach the market and transportation method used; how respondents heard about the market; and demographic information. The information gathered from the survey is analyzed in the following sections.

Marketing to Specific Groups

A cluster analysis of the survey data was performed to group consumers together based on similar preferences and characteristics. This resulted in three separate consumer clusters: Organic and Health Enthusiasts (240 consumers, 36 percent of total); Homegrown Enthusiasts (264, 39 percent); and Not Enthusiasts (165, 25 percent). This section discusses the characteristics of each of the three clusters and provides marketing ideas specifically targeted for each. Although you will not necessarily be able to identify cluster members on sight, understanding their characteristics and interests and integrating these marketing concepts into your marketing plan might help you offer more appeal to customers on a broader scale.

Organic and Health Enthusiasts

The first cluster identified was Organic and Health Enthusiasts. These customers were more willing to pay a premium for organic vegetables than other customers and were less concerned overall with product pricing. You can try to capitalize on this by making sure your certified organic products are clearly labeled, and if you sell products that are organic, but are not certified, be sure to include this information in product brochures and on signs you use to advertise products and prices.

Organic and Health Enthusiasts were found to eat 70 percent of their meals at home. Offering recipe cards and providing information about the best way to store and prepare your products will likely appeal to these customers. Providing wine pairing information could help enforce the concept of how your products can be used as ingredients to create a finished product. Since a healthy lifestyle, including diet and exercise, was important to this cluster, you might consider providing information about the nutritional benefits of your products, and perhaps provide recipes that are light and healthy. These consumers were more concerned with food safety than others. Communicating to your customers the safety benefits of locally produced foods might encourage members of this cluster to increase the purchases they make from you.

Organic and Health Enthusiasts	
Consumer Characteristics	Marketing Ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More willing to pay a premium for organic vegetables than others • Less concerned with product pricing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat 70 percent of meals at home • Have higher levels of education • Are concerned with diet, exercise and food safety • Have fewer children in household than Homegrown Enthusiasts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly label certified organic products • Include organic information on signs, brochures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide recipe cards • Provide product information (how to store, prepare) • Emphasize nutritional benefits of products • Advertise the safety benefits of local foods • Wine pairing with meal ideas using your products as ingredients

Homegrown Enthusiasts

The second customer cluster was identified as Homegrown Enthusiasts. These customers were less willing to pay a premium for organic vegetables than the Organic and Health Enthusiasts and were somewhat concerned with product pricing (more so than Organic and Health Enthusiasts). However, while this group showed less of a preference for organic foods, they showed a greater preference for both local and homegrown food. These customers eat 90 percent of their meals at home, have a preference for local foods and are supporters of local agriculture and agricultural open space.

To appeal to these customers, you should clearly indicate the origin of products, including both state and region, on labels, brochures and signs. Providing farm pictures, a description of the operation and your “farm story,” including the history of the operation and some information about your family as part of a brochure, will appeal to the members of this group as well. These customers will be attracted by the idea of supporting local agriculture and keeping open space in agriculture through supporting your operation. You may consider having photos of your farm/ranch to display at your market booth as well. As this group had more children in the household than other groups (and were more likely to have children) you should consider ways to make your booth appealing to families.

This group of consumers participated in both home gardening and food canning and preservation. Providing information to customers as to how they can cultivate the crops you grow in their own home garden might be of great appeal. While it may seem counterintuitive to encourage customers to grow the same products you are selling, this is not likely to decrease your sales as customers will not be able to produce the quantity or quality of product you can produce. However, this will show them your knowledge and expertise and will encourage them to remember you and your operation and return for repeat purchases. Developing relationships with your customers will generally have a positive effect on your sales. Providing information about or organizing demonstrations on how to can and preserve your products will appeal to these customers and will encourage them to make repeat purchases. As with the Organic and Health Enthusiasts, it is recommended that you provide recipes and preparation and pairing information to customers, as they eat nearly all of their meals at home (as opposed to eating out). This will also help them see the versatility of your products and remember your operation.

Homegrown Enthusiasts	
Consumer Characteristics	Marketing Ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less willing to pay a premium for organic vegetables than Organic and Health Enthusiasts • Somewhat concerned with product pricing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat 90 percent of meals at home • Concerned about local origin of food • Active in home gardening and canning • Support local agriculture & agricultural open space • Have more children in household than other two groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly label products as locally produced • Indicate state and region of production on labels, brochures and signs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell your "farm story" through photos, description of your operation • Teach customers what can be grown in their garden, provide tips specific to local climate • Offer information on canning and preserving your products • Provide recipe cards, preparation information

Not Enthusiasts

The final group of farmers' market customers was labeled as Not Enthusiasts. These customers were less willing to pay a premium for organic vegetables than the other two groups and were very concerned with product pricing in general. They were less concerned about diet, exercise and food safety than the other two clusters, and ate 40 percent of their meals at home. Taken with the other characteristics of this group, the low percentage of meals eaten at home might be an indication that these customers attend the market in search of ready-to-eat meals or for entertainment purposes. They might be motivated to purchase products that have had some further processing, such as salad mixes rather than individual greens or seasoned pre-cut meats to reduce preparation time and increase convenience. However, these customers are very sensitive to price so it should be made clear why further processed or other diversified products are more expensive than conventional products.

Not Enthusiasts	
Consumer Characteristics	Marketing Ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less willing to pay a premium for organic vegetables than other two groups • Very concerned with product pricing • Eat 40 percent of meals at home (less than national average of 50 percent) • Have lower education levels than other groups • Less concerned about diet, exercise and food safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information about organic and other diversified production methods • Offer products with some further processing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain pricing: freshness, high quality, diversified, further processed • Use farm story to differentiate yourself from produce aisle in grocery store • Provide recipe cards, preparation and pairing information

General Programming, Marketing and Advertising Ideas

The following marketing suggestions were developed using the results of the survey mentioned previously. The survey data was used to create a profile of the average customer for each market. The full study results, including programming and marketing suggestions, can be found in University Center for Economic Development Technical Report 2008/09-24, "Who is Shopping at Nevada's Farmers' Markets and Why?" (Curtis et al., 2009).

Programming

Capitalize on the "Green Movement"

At many of the markets, respondents indicated a high degree of participation in environmentally conscious activities such as recycling, composting and Earth Day. With the current nationwide "green movement," focusing on green issues could be highly beneficial to market managers. When determining event and activity programming for the season, you may consider a program that highlights the sustainable benefits of eating locally sourced foods, including lower energy (transportation) costs. One example of a potential educational program would be to explain the composting process, how it can be made feasible for people with limited space and how it reduces the amount of trash sent to landfills. Another program could involve educating respondents on what can and cannot be recycled in their area, with an emphasis on the environmental and community benefits of recycling.

Home Gardening

Home gardening, food canning and preservation, and in some cases the Master Gardener program, were given relatively high participation rates at most markets. In addition to providing education on home canning and preservation, your market may consider hosting a program that shows how local foods purchased at the market can be composted and used for home gardening to fertilize garden produce that can then be canned or preserved. Programs that educate market attendants about home gardening may also hold appeal for customers. This type of programming might give an overview of what grows well in home gardens in the area, what time of year gardeners should plant different items and what can be done to encourage growth in the arid climate of Nevada. Emphasis could be placed on natural or organic methods home gardeners may use.

Youth in Agriculture

Several markets had a high percentage of respondents who participate in 4-H, the National FFA Organization and youth groups. Appealing to the family-friendly nature of the market might be an effective way to reach these customers, while specific programs could be held to appeal to young people interested in agriculture. One way to do this would be to host events similar to those that might be found at a state or county fair, such as a judging event for produce grown or livestock raised by 4-H or FFA members, or a judging event for baked goods or craft items prepared by young people. Creating a state fair-like atmosphere might be an additional way to encourage more people to attend the market to participate in such events.

Buy Local

There is a trend among groups of consumers in the U.S. shifting away from mass retail and back to local business. Emphasizing the community benefits of local agriculture can be used as both a programming concept and as a marketing tool. Another trend in the U.S. is a specific shift towards buying and eating local products. There are many ways to incorporate this and many potential benefits. A large proportion of respondents indicated a concern for supporting local farmers and preserving agricultural open space. Market managers should consider hosting “meet the farmer” events, encouraging customers to become acquainted with the people who have grown the food they are purchasing and eating. The growers can then educate potential customers as to the benefits of purchasing local foods from their perspective. As most survey respondents indicated a concern with the origin of their food and with food safety, having the opportunity to meet and speak with the person who produced their food might be very valuable to customers and may have a positive impact on repeat visits to the market. Programs such as this can highlight the benefits of spending money locally by introducing customers to the direct beneficiaries of their food spending. Another angle from which to approach this topic is to emphasize that local foods are fresher than grocery store foods, as “freshness” was ranked either first, second or third on average as a produce attribute at every single market in Nevada.

Eat Local

On average, respondents at all markets indicated that they eat the majority of their meals at home, and statements such as “I have little time to prepare food” and “I eat out frequently” received low average rating scores. You may consider addressing customers’ propensity for eating at home through programs that show how products purchased at the market can be used in the home. Examples of this include cooking classes where a local chef prepares a meal solely from items that can be purchased at the market on stage or in a venue in which market attendants can easily watch. This would be an opportunity to feature vendors’ own recipes, which would serve the dual purpose of introducing customers to the vendor’s operation, or the chef’s own recipes, which might help to facilitate relations between local chefs and local producers and encourage them to continue working together after the market season. This would also capitalize on the “local” theme of the program.

Another example would be wine pairings, featuring local wineries and local foods. This could be accomplished either through a setting described above, where local experts speak to a large audience, or in smaller groups with actual wine tasting. Local breweries could be involved in this type of program as well.

Organic and Natural Production

Although organic and natural products are becoming more prevalent on mainstream grocery store shelves, many consumers are still unsure as to what these terms really mean. An educational program that describes the differences between these production methods would likely appeal to customers who are unaware of the differences, as well as customers who would like to expand their knowledge. This would provide an opportunity to profile market vendors who produce organic and/or natural products and might encourage customers to purchase products from these vendors if they haven’t done so in the past.

Water Conservation

As Nevada is largely a high desert arid climate, farmers' market attendants might be interested in programming that addresses methods of water conservation, such as inviting a speaker from a local water authority to present attendants with methods for reducing their personal water usage. A topic that is likely to be popular would be low water-use landscaping, as outdoor landscaping is a main driver of the increased water use and water costs Nevada's residents experience during the summer months. A speaker from a local gardening and landscaping outlet or a local landscaping operation could inform market attendants about the benefits of using native plants and/or shrubs in landscaping. This would provide the opportunity for the local business to advertise its own operation, which may encourage the business to promote the market in return.

Marketing

Emphasize Quality

At all markets, respondents rated several quality and value attributes of fruit and vegetables above price. This is very important, as it shows that customers approach pricing at farmers' markets with an attitude that is different from the cost-conscious attitude they may have at the grocery store. In the current economic climate, it is more important than ever to communicate to customers and to the community that farmers' markets are a place where people can purchase high-quality products whose value exceeds prices. Additionally, you might consider emphasizing that purchasing foods from a local producer keeps money in the local economy.

Foster a Relationship through Brochures and Recipes

At the market, it might be beneficial for vendors to create and hand out brochures about their operation, their products and themselves. For producers and vendors who do not have the time or opportunity to develop personal relationships with their customers, a brochure is a simple way of introducing a producer to a customer. If your operation uses special production methods, such as organic agriculture, your brochure can outline this information and explain why it is important, as respondents indicated that they are concerned with the safety and quality of their food. Providing some personal information about yourself and your family may increase the chances that the customer will feel a connection with you and your products, which will encourage the customer to make repeat purchases.

Providing recipe cards that use ingredients you sell will help to foster the relationship between you and your customers while also encouraging customers to make purchases from you and consider your products in terms of what can be made from them. If an "Eat Local" program is held at the market, recipes will encourage customers to remember the vendor and the vendor's products.

Your Stall Display

Customers who are unfamiliar with your operation will base their first opinion on the appearance of you and your stall. It is important to remember that when you're at a market, you are no longer a producer; you are a salesperson. Be friendly and knowledgeable, provide information about how your products were grown or made (this is a good opportunity to offer a recipe card or brochure) and use the opportunity to tell the customers about upcoming product availability or market events. Think of

the things that you appreciate when you are shopping and try to do these things, and think of things you dislike when shopping and try to avoid them. Your products might be high-quality enough to sell themselves, but they will certainly sell better with your help.

As most farmers' markets in Nevada take place in the heat and sun, a first recommendation is to ensure that your stall provides a bit of shade for your customers. If they are cool and comfortable, they will be encouraged to stay and browse your products longer. "Keep it high and let it fly" is a motto Jost and Taylor-Puckett (n.d. p. 3) recommend, as you will garner more attention if your display has many levels to attract the eye, and make sure you restock your products after a rush and condense the display as the day goes on and supply dwindles. They also recommend using color contrast in your stall, which attracts the eye as well. If your products are all of a similar color, they suggest that you add props or purchase a bouquet from another vendor to add some color. Signs advertising your operation, your products and your prices should be clearly displayed, and if your operation has a logo, make sure it is on all signs. This will tell customers who you are and make it easier for them to remember you and find you again in the future.

Be Part of the Community

Farmers' markets are a community affair; they bring people from the community together to socialize and enjoy food and other items grown and created within the community. You can use your market's standing as a community member to reach out to more of the community by participating in community events such as home and garden shows and health fairs (Jost and Taylor-Puckett, n.d.). Another way to show your commitment to community support is to host an event highlighting the issue of hunger in your local area by collecting all leftover produce at the end of the market and donating it to a local food bank or soup kitchen, or set aside a stall at the market and let a different local nonprofit or other community group use it for free each week (Jost and Taylor-Puckett, n.d.).

Working Together

There is evidence that bringing market managers together is beneficial for individual markets and the system as a whole. Inviting other managers to attend your market will provide you with a new perspective on your market (Lev, Brewer, and Stephenson, 2004) and may introduce you to strengths or weaknesses of which you were not previously aware. Networking with other managers can provide you with an opportunity to learn from their mistakes and accomplishments, while coordinating market events so that markets are not competing for the same customers at the same time can benefit all markets involved. Market managers can also work together to support (or oppose) government actions that could be beneficial (or detrimental) to markets or local agriculture (Bachmann, 2008; Wallace Center, 2007).

Advertising

Word-of-Mouth Advertising

Word-of-mouth was the overall most effective advertising tool based on the farmers' market survey results. This shows the importance of providing excellent service and developing relationships with customers. A customer who has an enjoyable experience with a vendor is likely to return to make additional purchases in the future and might be compelled to tell other current or potential customers

about his or her experience. Likewise, a poor experience can be damaging. Taking the time to foster a relationship with customers rather than viewing the market as a series of transactions is a cost-effective way to advertise.

Online Advertising

For the most part, online advertising was not as effective as other methods of advertisement. However, the Internet is increasingly becoming a main source of information for households in the U.S., particularly as more print publications increase their online exposure. Additionally, with the advent of television recording systems such as TiVo and DVR, increasing numbers of consumers are recording television programs and fast-forwarding through the commercials, decreasing the effectiveness of television advertisements (Eggerton, 2008). It is recommended that all markets consider online advertising and e-mail advertising. Asking market attendants to sign up for e-mail newsletters is a cost-effective way of reaching many customers at once. As many respondents to this survey provided information that would indicate they are environmentally conscious, e-advertising can also be billed as a demonstration of the market's commitment to cutting paper waste.

Another use for e-newsletters is a platform for introducing customers to vendors and providing incentives for customers to return to the market each week. This could involve featuring one or two vendors each week in this newsletter as a way to begin a relationship between the customer and the vendor. The featured vendors could offer some sort of discount or promotion as well. The market manager could include a coupon with the newsletter, although this would eliminate the option of using the newsletter as proof of commitment to sustainability. Another option would be to include a code word in the newsletter that customers could use with the featured vendor at the market to receive the promotion. Although this may seem a bit complicated in theory, restricting promotions to people on the newsletter's mailing list will provide incentive for customers to join the mailing list, thus increasing both the number of people who receive the newsletter directly and the odds that the newsletter will be forwarded to other interested parties. A second paperless option would be to have a drawing for a market-related prize each week, such as a discount that can be used on any vendor. Having the drawing restricted to newsletter subscribers will provide incentive for people to join.

Local Advertising

Another way to emphasize the local aspect of the markets and product through advertising is to advertise the market in locally owned businesses in the area. Market managers should consider contacting local restaurants, coffee shops, lawn and garden suppliers, churches, suppliers of environmentally friendly products, community supported agriculture groups (CSAs), etc. to see if they would be interested in displaying signs or flyers in the business. Depending on the type of business and whether the business regularly sends out newsletters, it might be beneficial to ask to be mentioned in the newsletter as well. The advertising placed in these types of outlets should describe not only the time and place of the market, but include an overview of product and vendor availability as well. Fresh, local produce can be used as a bartering tool to secure this type of advertising for free, or as a way to thank local business owners for their support. In addition, this will encourage the business owners to sample products and attend the market themselves, and/or describe their positive experience to customers of their own.

Working the Media

Bachmann (2008) suggests that markets “work the media” to get news of the market out. A marketing industry rule-of-thumb is that editorial media coverage is seven times as valuable as paid coverage (Corum, Rosenzweig and Gibson as cited in Jost and Taylor-Puckett, n.d., p. 1; Myers, 2009). Jost and Taylor-Puckett (n.d.) assert that a farmers’ market and the media have every reason to collaborate, as events at the market are hopefully of interest to the community. They suggest that the market manager create a media packet with information about the market’s hours and dates of operation, including those of special events, a list of market products and an outline of product availability and a short history of the market with brief vendor profiles. Another suggestion from the authors is that you build a relationship with key media personnel and acknowledge any free coverage the market is given by sending a thank you note, bouquet or gift basket of donated market products (if the media company allows this; not all do), and work to enhance this relationship by following through on commitments.

A final recommendation from Jost and Taylor-Puckett is that market participants take advantage of community calendars with local newspapers, radio stations and websites, send out press releases when key crops come into season and as special events approach and contact media outlets to see if they are interested in featuring a recipe of the week based on available products.

Assessing Your Market

The Nevada farmers’ market data for this publication was collected from an in-person consumer survey conducted at markets across the state. While such a survey may provide the most in-depth information about customers and their preferences, full surveys are costly in terms of both time and money from developing and conducting the survey to analyzing the results. A few alternatives to formal surveys are presented below. Further information about market evaluation and tips for doing it well can be found in “Tools for Rapid Market Assessment” on Oregon State University’s Cooperative Extension website, and “Farmers’ Markets: Marketing and Business Guide” on ATTRA’s website (<http://attra.ncat.org/>).

Mystery Shoppers

Mystery shoppers are recruited by the market manager to report back on their experience at the market (Bachmann, 2008). Mystery shoppers are typically provided with instructions prior to shopping and a form to fill out to provide information on their shopping experience. This provides the manager with valuable feedback from the customer’s perspective and is easier and less costly than a full survey.

Dot Surveys

Dot surveys are a simple “self-service” survey that has market customers place colored dot stickers on large paper canvases to respond to simple questions (Lev, Brewer, and Stephenson, 2004). The market manager sets up easels with large sheets of paper on which questions are written with ample space for customers to place their dots in the appropriate category. Dot surveys are used for simple questions, such as asking how far the customer traveled to reach the market, how much they typically spend, etc. The upside is that the surveys are simple and customers find them fun. The major downside is that customers can see the responses given by others, which may affect their response. You can help avoid

this by “seeding” each page with dots which you remove or discount when analyzing the responses. The question sheets should be replaced throughout the day, which removes previous responses and allows you to analyze the responses by time of day.

Attendance Counts

Attendance or pedestrian counts (Lev, Brewer, and Stephenson, 2004; Bachmann, 2008) provide information about the flow of customers attending a market. An attendance count is done simply by posting counters at all entrances to the market and counting the number of adults who enter the market for 10 minutes each hour (this should be the same 10 minutes of each hour; for example, from half-past to 40 minutes after the hour each hour). Multiplying the number of entrants during this 10-minute period by six will give you an estimate of the number of people who came to the market during that hour. The estimates from each hour can be summed at the close of the market to provide a rough approximation of total number of people attending the market that day. A warning about generalizing the information gained through an attendance count is that all of the information from the count is specific to that particular day; attendance will be affected by season, weather, product availability and other community events. Bachmann (2008) recommends that a count be taken several times throughout the season and on days both with and without special market events. Performing an attendance count several times during a season will provide valuable information about peak hours and the flow of customers into the market, help vendors to determine potential sales through the day (and across the season if performed regularly) and assist the market manager in providing information to area businesses as to what sort of spillover business they can expect, which in turn can help promote the argument of the market as a valuable member of the local business community.

Vendor Surveys

While it is important to have information about your customers’ preferences and market expectations, it is just as valuable to know what the vendors at a market expect to achieve through their participation in the market. In addition to providing vendors with an outlet to express their expectations and voice any concerns, a survey can allow vendors to be a part of marketing decisions by giving them an opportunity to present their ideas (Bachmann, 2008).

Causes of Market Decline

A publication by Oregon State researchers Stephenson, Lev, and Brewer (2008), focuses on the reasons farmers’ markets fail. Using market survey data, interviews, focus groups and an advisory committee composed of farmers’ market managers, the study examined quantitative and qualitative data to track such market information as years in operation, manager turnover, fee structures and revenue sources, market site amenities, typical products sold and management structures. The qualitative data for the study came from a survey of 50 markets in 2002; by 2005 nine of these markets had closed (the study also found that between 1998 and 2005, 62 new farmers’ markets opened in Oregon while 32 closed after one or more seasons). Additional data came from directories of farmers’ markets in Oregon, published by the Oregon Farmers’ Market Association and the Oregon Department of Agriculture. In analyzing the survey and directory data, the researchers determined that there were five key factors that led to the closing of these markets: size, farm product availability, administrative revenue, manager salary and manager turnover.

The following tables briefly describe the issues related to these factors and possible solutions market managers may consider as precautions against the factors. These factors are all related to one another, as the size of the market dictates product availability, generation of administrative revenue and manager salary, which may be tied directly to manager turnover. While these are not the only factors that might cause a market to fail, the authors caution that any market that sees itself declining in size should take caution, as the loss of customers will lead to a loss in vendors, which will lead to a loss in products and revenue, etc. Many helpful suggestions for approaching the issue of finding vendors and customers for your market can be found in “Attracting Vendors and Customers to Rural Farmers’ Markets” (Meier, 2009).

Factor: Size of Market	
Issue	Possible Solution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small size makes it difficult to attract vendors • Small size makes it difficult to attract customers • Market may decrease in size prior to closing for good 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anchor vendor who can provide a sufficient quantity of a wide variety of products all season • Work with community members to determine optimal time, day, location, etc. for the market (see Meier, 2009 for more suggestions) • Keep an eye on vendor and attendance numbers, establish a plan for dealing with decreased numbers in advance

Factor: Farm Product Availability	
Issue	Possible Solution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough produce, meat or seafood products • Not enough value-added products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anchor vendor • Seek vendors with prepared products, encourage existing vendors to consider new value-added products

Factor: Administrative Revenue	
Issue	Possible Solution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not enough administrative revenue to run market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconsider fee structure for vendors (stall fees, percentage of vendor revenue, annual fees, etc.) • Consider outside funding sources such as sponsorship by a company, health or religious organization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundraising through community events • Donations, grants • Sell market apparel: grocery bags, hats, tee shirts with market logo

Factor: Manager Salary	
Issue	Possible Solution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer and low salaries linked to market closure • Effort threshold related to salary, amount of time to dedicate to market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconsider manager salary • Seek additional volunteer staff

Factor: Manager Turnover	
Issue	Possible Solution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Markets that closed had turnover rate of 46 percent • Most closed markets had new manager in final year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage peer training, evaluation among managers • Establish or join existing farmers' market organization <p>Seek additional volunteer staff in years with new manager</p>

Additional Resources

University of Nevada Cooperative Extension (UNCE) offers non-degree educational programming and publications on topics including agriculture, horticulture, community development and natural resources. Information about educational programs and electronic copies of publications can be found online at <http://www.unce.unr.edu/>.

The Farmers' Market Promotion Program (FMPP) provides grants through USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) targeted to help improve and expand domestic farmers' markets, roadside stands, community-supported agriculture programs, agri-tourism activities and other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities. For more information on the program and how to apply for one of these grants, visit the AMS website at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/fmpp>.

Oregon State University Cooperative Extension has done numerous studies into direct marketing and farmers' markets. Search the publications database at <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/index.php>.

The Wallace Center at Winrock International has publications for farmers and market managers considering or already working with a farmers' market, including "Recruiting Vendors for a Farmers' Market" and "Getting Started with Farmers' Markets." These publications and other information can be found online at <http://www.wallacecenter.org/our-work/Resource-Library/wallace-publications/handbooks/>.

Rural Roots and the University of Idaho have put together a series of farm case studies developed to provide information about direct marketing opportunities for food producers in their regional food system and how they have affected the operations of actual producers. These case studies and other direct marketing information can be found online at Rural Roots' website at <http://www.ruralroots.org/Programs/nwdirect/casestudies/default.asp>.

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